



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Office of the Air Traffic Organization
Western Service Area

1601 Lind Avenue Southwest
Renton, Washington 98057

February 28, 2018

Ms. Kathryn Leonard
State Historic Preservation Office
1100 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Section 106 Consultation for Proposed Air Traffic Procedure Amendments for the West Flow Area Navigation Standard Instrument Departures at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, Phoenix, Arizona

Dear Ms. Leonard,

As we previously informed you, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is proposing to amend the west flow Area Navigation (RNAV) Standard Instrument Departure (SID) procedures from runways 25 Left (L), 25 Right (R) and 26 at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX). The proposed amendments to air traffic procedures are the first step in implementing an agreement between the FAA, the City of Phoenix, and certain historic neighborhood associations as a result of the court decision in *City of Phoenix, Arizona v. Huerta*, 869 F.3d 963 (D.C. Cir. 2017), and are intended to provide interim noise relief to the Petitioners by approximating the western departure routes that were in place before the September 2014 RNAV procedures.¹ This proposed action has been determined an ‘undertaking’ subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR part 800 (as amended), and accordingly we initiated consultation with you in December 2017.

As originally proposed, aircraft departing west and turning north would follow along the extended runway centerline and then join the RNAV route at the ZIDOG waypoint. Aircraft departing west and continuing on a westward flight path would proceed to the KEENS waypoint. Aircraft departing west and turning south would closely follow the Pre-RNAV Western Route flight tracks close to the WETAL waypoint, where air traffic control would then vector aircraft to join a departure route that closely follows the current published RNAV procedures (FTHLS, KATMN, BNYRD, and JUDTH RNAV SIDs). The simulated centerlines of these procedures and associated waypoints/fixes are shown on Attachment A.

¹ Step Two of the agreement, which is not part of the current undertaking, will involve the development of long-term replacement procedures for western departures at Phoenix Sky Harbor and will consider other proposed changes to the Phoenix airspace.

Through initial consultation conducted with your office, the City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office, the Gila River Indian Community, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Ak-Chin Indian Community of the Maricopa, and the Tohono O'odham Indian Community, we have been made aware of the presence of traditional cultural properties (TCPs) in the area overflown by aircraft departing west and turning south. These TCPs are potentially sensitive to effects of overflights that introduce a visual, atmospheric, or auditory element. We are therefore revising the proposal in order to make the WETAL procedure unavailable to aircraft departing west and turning south, and to leave in place the current procedures for those departures until we are better able to determine how these resources might be affected by any changes. To that end, we will be continuing consultation with the tribes, with your office and with the other consulting parties on the southern departure routes.

In the meantime, we are proceeding with the proposed ZIDOG and KEENS RNAV SIDs in order to provide the interim noise relief to the Petitioners in *City of Phoenix, Arizona v. Huerta*. (Although the WETAL departure procedure will be charted, it will not be made available for use.) These procedures would not affect tribal lands or historic properties that have been identified as having religious or cultural significance to any tribe. With your agreement, the FAA would like to address the remaining steps in the Section 106 process for these two procedures in this letter, as provided by 36 CFR §800.3(g). The FAA has held three public workshops and accepted public comments on these procedures, thereby providing opportunity for the public to express their views.

Area of Potential Effect

The FAA originally proposed an Area of Potential Effect (APE) encompassing areas that could receive reportable noise increases. David Jacobs of your staff and Michelle Dodds, Historic Preservation Officer for the City of Phoenix, in turn proposed an APE consisting of a two-mile buffer zone around each proposed departure route in order to assess indirect effects (i.e. auditory and atmospheric) to historic properties.² Based on this input and in light of the revised undertaking, we are proposing a new APE, as shown in Attachment B, consisting of a two-mile buffer zone around the ZIDOG and KEENS westflow departure routes (The WETAL departure procedure will not be flown by aircraft and so would have no potential to affect historic properties).

To identify historic properties in the APE, the FAA reviewed available databases of listed and eligible properties and conducted remote "windshield surveys" of the APE using Google Earth Streetview. The FAA also requested assistance from the consulting parties in identifying historic properties where a quiet setting is a contributing factor to the property's historic significance.

² Ms. Dodds also suggested using an alternative noise metric, single event level (SEL) instead of day-night average sound level (DNL). DNL, which the FAA formally adopted in 1981 as its primary metric to evaluate cumulative noise effects on people due to aviation activities, takes into account the noise level of each individual aircraft event, the number of times those events occur, and the time of day in which they occur. DNL includes a 10-decibel (dB) noise penalty added to noise events occurring from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., to reflect the increased sensitivity to noise and lower ambient sound levels at night. The FAA relies upon the day night average sound levels (DNL) rather than single event noise analysis because DNL has been established as the best measure of significant impact on the quality of the human environment; it is the only noise metric with a substantial body of scientific data on the reaction of people to noise; and it has been systematically related to federal compatible land use guidelines.

Other than the TCPs in the area of South Mountain, none were identified. Based on the following analysis of effects, we find it unnecessary to conduct further identification efforts.

Assessment of Effects

Because this undertaking does not require land acquisition, construction, or other ground disturbance, there would be no direct physical effects to historic resources. Therefore, potential effects are limited to indirect effects from aircraft overflights, primarily noise. To identify the potential for a noise effect on historic properties, the FAA conducted an initial noise “screening” analysis to provide estimates of where noise increases may occur. The noise screening analysis indicated that the undertaking would not result in changes to noise exposure that exceed the significant noise threshold.³

Recognizing that some types of historic properties may be affected by overflights even at a noise level below these criteria, the FAA also considered the potential for the introduction of visual, atmospheric or auditory elements that could diminish the integrity of the property’s historic features. We compared the proposed procedures with current flight tracks, as shown in Attachment C, and determined that there would be no new areas overflown, and therefore no potential to introduce new visual, atmospheric or auditory elements.

Proposed Finding

The FAA is proposing a finding of “no historic properties affected” for the ZIDOG and KEENS RNAV SIDs because these procedures would not have any effect on historic properties that may be present in the APE. By copy of this letter, we are notifying the other consulting parties, and will make it available to the public on our website at

https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/nextgen_near_you/community_involvement/phx/.

Please let us know within 30 days if you concur with or object to this finding. We look forward to your response. If you have any initial comments or questions on this undertaking, please contact Marina Landis at (425) 203-4561, or marina.landis@faa.gov.

Sincerely,



Shawn Kozica, Group Manager
Operations Support Group
Western Service Center

Attachments

³ The FAA considers an increase of DNL 1.5 dB or more for a noise sensitive area that is exposed to noise at or above the DNL 65 dB noise exposure level, or that will be exposed at or above the DNL 65 dB level due to a DNL 1.5 dB or greater increase to be significant.

Cc:

David Jacobs, Compliance Specialist/Archaeologist, Arizona State Historic Preservation Office
Michelle Dobbs, Phoenix Historic Preservation Officer
Jordan Feld, Deputy Aviation Director, City of Phoenix Aviation Department
Steve Dreiseszun, Point of Contact for the Historic Neighborhood Petitioners
Brent Kleinman, President, Encanto-Palmcroft Historic Preservation Association
Andie Abkarian, President, Roosevelt Action Association
Robert Cannon, President, Willo Neighborhood Association
Will Denney, President, Story Preservation Association
Robert Miguel, Chair, Ak-Chin Indian Community Council
Stephen Roe Lewis, Governor, Gila River Indian Community
Barnaby V. Lewis, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Gila River Indian Community
Diane Enos, President, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
Shane Anton, Cultural Programs Manager, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
Edward D. Manuel, Chair, Tohono O'odham Nation
Peter Steere, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Cultural Affairs Department, Tohono
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